


# the buzz



December 2019

## TIPS FOR HEALTHY HOLIDAY BALANCE

**Sleep loss, stress, poor eating habits and not enough time to exercise can derail any healthy habits this holiday season. Try the activities below to help bring balance to your holiday.**

**Sleep:** Sleep is a complex biological state of mind that helps you process new information, stay healthy and feel rested. Try these tips for a good night's sleep.

- **Relax before going to bed:** Don't overschedule your day so that no time is left to unwind. A relaxing activity, such as reading or listening to music, should be part of your bedtime ritual.
- **Have a good sleeping environment:** Get rid of anything in your bedroom that might distract you from sleeping, such as noises, bright lights, an uncomfortable bed or overly warm temperatures. Create an environment conducive to sleep such as light blocking curtains, soft sheets, soothing smells or a white noise machine.
- **Don't lie in bed awake:** If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and complete a relaxing activity, like listening to music or reading a book. The anxiety of not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep.

**Stress:** Stress is a physical and emotional response to overwhelming responsibility, events and changes. While there is no way to avoid stress, there are ways to alleviate it. Here are some examples.

- **Ground Yourself:** This is a technique that can be used when you are feeling overwhelmed. It will divert your mind away from a stressful moment. Here is a five-step grounding technique:

1. Describe **five** things you see in the room.
2. Name **four** things you can feel or touch.
3. List **three** things you hear.
4. Name **two** things you can smell.
5. Think of **one** good thing about your situation.

- **Turn on your favorite music:** Studies show that turning on music you love can decrease your stress while increasing your sense of well-being and personal control.
- **Move away from the source of stress:** Try physically moving away from the source of stress. Give yourself time to walk away and decompress. This may help you gain a new perspective.

**Healthy Eating:** Parties, celebrations, special treats and meals during the holidays can make it challenging to eat properly. Try these tips to keep nutritionally balanced during the holidays.

- **Taste special foods:** Go ahead and have a taste of special foods, but limit portion sizes. Choose the dishes you really enjoy and cannot get any other time of year. Keep in mind that the first couple of bites may be the tastiest - this may help you limit portion sizes.
- **Savor each bite:** Take time to pay attention to each bite of food. While eating, observe the color, smell, flavor and texture of food to help you more fully enjoy your meal.

- **Eat slowly:** It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to realize you are full. You may find that you end up eating less when you slow down.

**Exercise:** It may be easy to neglect exercise during a busy holiday season - especially if the holidays throw off your regular exercise routine. When you are not able to fit exercise into your day, try one or more of the tips below.

- **Enter exercise as an appointment reminder:** When days get busy, enter your workout in your phone or calendar as an appointment. It acts as a good reminder and helps you fit it into your busy schedule.
- **Complete small bouts of exercise throughout your day:** Increasing daily activity does not mean you need to go to a gym or exercise for 30 minutes. Activities can be incorporated throughout your day in small increments. Examples could include walking for 5-10 minutes during your lunch, completing stretches at your desk or completing side leg lifts while you wait for your turn at the copier.
- **Stretch:** Take a break and work on your flexibility with stretching. Not only will stretching make you feel limber, it will help you improve performing daily tasks, like bending over to tie your shoelaces or reaching the top kitchen cabinet.

# DECEMBER EVENTS

## In-House Personal Trainer

**Days:** Tuesdays and Thursdays

**Time:** 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Location:** Carnahan Courthouse Fitness Center

Carnahan Courthouse Fitness Center members will have access to BeeFit Wellness Coordinator Cathy Hargrove. Cathy is a Certified Personal Trainer. She can help with questions about the fitness equipment and its proper usage.

### Interested in becoming a member?

Contact BeeFit Wellness Coordinator Cathy Hargrove by email at [hargrovec@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:hargrovec@stlouis-mo.gov) or call 314-622-4849 to schedule your required Fitness Center orientation.

## December Blood Pressure Clinic Schedule

A nurse from BJC HealthCare will check your blood pressure and provide on-site hypertension education.

### December 3

City Hall Rotunda - 10-11 a.m.

Carnahan Building, Room 921 - 11:30 a.m.-noon

### December 10

Airport, Human Resources Office - 1-2 p.m.

Street Department, Conference Room - 3-4 p.m.

### December 17

1520 Market Street, 2nd floor Kiosk Room - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

City Justice Center, Quiet Room - 1:15-2:15 p.m.

Water Division-McRee, Lunch Room - 3-4 p.m.

### December 18

Water Division-Chain of Rocks, Lunch Room - 1:15-1:45 p.m.

Medium Security Institution, Lunch Room - 2:15-3:15 p.m.

## Blood pressure kiosks are located at the following worksites

Check your blood pressure at one of the worksite kiosk locations.

Worksite	Worksite Address
1520 Market Street	1520 Market St., 2nd floor Kiosk Room, St. Louis, MO 63103
Refuse Department	1200 Central Industrial Dr., Lunch Room, St. Louis, MO 63110
Carnahan Building	1114 Market St., 9th Floor, St. Louis, MO 63101
Medium Security Institution	7600 Hall St., Lunch Room, St. Louis, MO 63147
City Justice Center	200 S. Tucker Blvd., Lunch Room, St. Louis, MO 63101

## Can high blood pressure be prevented?

You can take several steps to maintain normal blood pressure levels:

- Get your blood pressure checked regularly. See table below to see where your blood pressure falls:

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic (upper number)		Diastolic (lower number)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
High blood pressure hypertension stage 1	130-139	or	80-89
High blood pressure hypertension stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive crisis	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

- Eat a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, lean meats and complex carbohydrates like brown rice.
- Try to reduce sodium and caffeine intake since these can raise your blood pressure.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Losing just 5% of your body weight can lower your risk for high blood pressure as well as help with other health conditions, like diabetes.
- Be physically active every day. Complete activities you enjoy — if they are enjoyable, you will keep doing them!



Provided by:  
Department of Personnel and BJC HealthCare  
for the BeeFit Wellness Program

For more information:  
Contact Cathy Hargrove at 314-622-4849 or  
[hargrovec@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:hargrovec@stlouis-mo.gov)

Look for us on:  

**BJC** HealthCare